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Marketing in New Game Companies

iOS

Thesis

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Thesis Abstract

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This study focuses on digital game companies and their marketing duties and requirements in the process of new game creation. The research concentrates on the practices, which make the creation of different marketing campaigns possible.

Theoretical chapters cover the major approaches of the launch processes, marketing and sales channels and online marketing of games. Interviews were conducted in three digital game companies.

Results show that the main channels of social media marketing have been regularized. The practices of digital game marketing are still varying.

Many new subjects for further study were found while doing the research. These are: Game reviewer pages, compensation of reviewers and the profitability of critic pages, possibilities to analyze the marketing data of game industry, financing, labor laws and taxation of game companies, creation of new marketing network in social media, and using the applications and services presented in this thesis for creating a marketing campaign.

Keywords: iOS, mobile, game, online marketing.

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Opinnäytetyön tiivistelmä

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Tässä lopputyössä selvitetään digitaalisten peliyritysten markkinoinnin työtehtäviä ja vaatimuksia pelin luomisprosessissa. Työ keskittyy käytäntöihin ja perusteisiin, jotka tekevät erilaisten markkinointikampanjoiden luomisen mahdolliseksi.

Teoriaosuudessa käsitellään tutkimuksia pelien julkaisuprosesseista, markkinointi- ja myyntikanavista sekä verkkomarkkinoinnista. Haastattelututkimus tehtiin kolmeen eri peliyritykseen.

Tulokset osoittavat, että sosiaalisen median pääkanavat ovat vakinaistuneet, mutta pelialan markkinointi ei vielä ole.

Tutkimuksen perusteella voidaan nimetä paljon jatkotutkimusaiheita. Näitä ovat: Pelikriittikkosivustot, niiden kannattavuus ja kriitikoiden korvaukset, pelialan markkinointidatan analysointimahdollisuudet, peliyritysten rahoitus, työlait ja verotus, uuden markkinointiverkoston muodostuminen sosiaalisessa mediassa, sekä markkinointikampanjan luominen tässä tutkimuksessa esille tuoduilla sovelluksilla ja palveluilla.

Keywords: iOS, mobiili, peli, digitaalinen markkinointi.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the research

Ever since I first saw first a video game when I was a kid, I have been really intrigued by gaming. I have spent my entire life most of my spare time by consuming what the game industry has had to offer. I have experience on online games since early 2000 and have experience basically from every genre and plenty of platforms. I have been a part of communities, guilds, taken part in tournaments. I have a long experience on a PvP team and solo play in various genres. I have seen several marketing campaigns, highs and lows, played through hundreds of games with various mechanics, and been around long enough to recognize true gaming clichés. Given my studies and my lifelong experience as a gamer since the early days, my vision of the game industry is not entirely from consumer point of view, but business side is more than familiar for me as well. After my over a decade long time as an active regular player and long friendships with other similarly minded persons in positions inside the game industry, the mobile platform was yet my least known and used.

One day I opened my fresh local newspaper from my home town and I saw an awesome article about a new company, which is developing their first mobile game and in my home town. It was really refreshing news, it was almost hard to believe! After reading the article, I took a day to think of a plan and got contact information and called. This was the perfect thesis for me, a game company basically next door.

1.2 Aims of the research

After meeting with the company, I wrote down: What do they need to know in order for them to get their first game to become viral. First my head was filled with all kinds of campaigns and other ideas, but after I read plenty of source material it became soon clear to me, that no matter how special your campaign for virality might be, no plan without a basis will lead to any permanent results, I personally had no idea how I would measure the success. All campaigns need to be monitored and variables are many. Many features need cooperation of other

departments, communications is everything. By realizing this, I chose to research first what a marketing department is all about in the game development process. Aims of the research became as much as to be a guide for any starting game company focusing on Marketing Department with a hint of Public Relations and Management.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

The idea is to give an execute option for any task given in the thesis for practical use. However, I do not explain basic functions of any given applications (app/s), service or social media. The thesis purpose is to act as a guideline to benefit a person who knows what is any given app, service is or social media channel referred in the thesis or uses Bibliography and Appendices accordingly.

The idea is to give an introduction under the presumption that the companies do not exist if they do not have visibility at the very least in main social media channels. This is comparable with the assumption of a homepage being your main visibility a while back.

The second chapter gives you a vision on how to build your online presence in social media today and help you with the basic structure of online game marketing. As main sources I have used two of Robert DellaFave articles written in 2013 located at Tuts+, a hub service for various advanced tutorials; An Indie Game Developer's Marketing Checklist and Marketing Your Indie Game: The single most important thing that no one know how to do.

When the reader is given the basics of online presence, the mind is more open for envisioning various campaigns in given frames. For the flow in chapter three I use two different sources: Buzz Marketing by Mark Hughes published in 2005 and a Journal of Marketing Research article by Jonah Berger and Kathrine L. Milkman from the University of Pennsylvania, What makes Online Content go Viral published in 2009. The goal is to give the reader a feeling on what kind of campaigns it might be a good idea to get on with, what to plan. Promotion can be abstract.

The reader should now be able to start visualizing the idea of a marketing campaign. As mentioned earlier, a campaign will not bear any fruit if not given proper basis. It is necessary to know how to measure the success of any given campaign and make changes as necessary. Skills for basic data analysis are needed. For this I have chosen Mobile Dev Memo by Eric B. Seufert “The 10 Commandments of Mobile User Acquisition, 2013 and Quarterview article by Joseph Kim, “Introduction to Mobile Analytics & Reporting, 2013. My aim is to give the reader a perspective on what is the basic data to be analyzed and what are the important tasks for the marketing department in general. For deeper but closely related concepts not mentioned specifically in the thesis, I have added as Appendix 2 as well as introduction for delegations of other departments as Appendix 3.

The questions where and what have been now answered; how to do it is a totally different matter. To put any action into practice calls for a wide range of apps, services, partnerships and contacts. Sylvain Gauchet, co-founder of Apptamin.com, is the author of countless of articles in their professional hub for mobile app marketing and promotion. As the main source for chapter five I have used his long article written in 2013 “The iOS AppMarketing Strategy Guide”. In this chapter I intend to give the reader a library for basic apps and tools needed for the tasks at hand.

For the empirical part I chose an online survey to get a perspective on daily routines in marketing related issues in Finnish mobile game companies. As a guideline I used Research Methods in Business Studies 4th edition by Ghauri, P. & Grønhaug, K. 2010. I created a semi-structured open interview by giving participants an opportunity to answer freely to the questions I designed from basis of the thesis structure. I received four fully validated answer sheets that were from three different game companies; Housemarque, Headnought and Flatfish Games, all located in Finland.

2 ONLINE PRESENCE

According to DellaFave, R. 2013 in his articles, there are steps considered as favorable towards your marketing success when launching and analyzing your data continuously to help your internal decisions. These include for things that are simply just crucial for your business and guidelines how to deal with press and audience, both of which need different kind of approach. When acting as liaison between the customers and developers (dev/s), approach is more casual within the company guidelines. Dealing with the press on the other hand is considered as more official and time consuming. This is when you make decisions about what kind of information you are going to give out in public and what not. Company personality should not affect personal life too much, which is why guidelines in working environment are needed when dealing with such issues to avoid any confusion. Positive and clear perspective is usually all-covering.

There are a few things that none of the devs should not miss. Things you just simply need to have before launch date. Homepages for the company are necessary to create a link between the dev team and your games. It will help when launching different brands or titles -to make the company name known as well. Fans are eager to know about new developments in their favorite games and information can be shared in a development blog linked in various social media channels. Some of them you can use for simply sharing information and other services for trailers. Forums are always good way share and archive various data and fan posts, but you should avoid sending information you can show for example in a Facebook feed by just sending a link to other site without any other notes.

Marketing campaign should usually be launched at least a few days before the actual release date, according to the budget of your campaign of course. Early buzz is good and cheap marketing, so as soon as you have something worthy, like a screenshot or a trailer, will surely raise some chatter. Good ways to raise pre-release awareness is to launch microsites for email newsletter or note to advertise RSS feed for a chance to get early news to interested audience and subscribers. Following relevant news with the help of RSS Feed will help your own

development and as it is well used, also name your own news files in a way that makes them seen in such feeds. Software such as Digg Reader is developed for RSS feed.

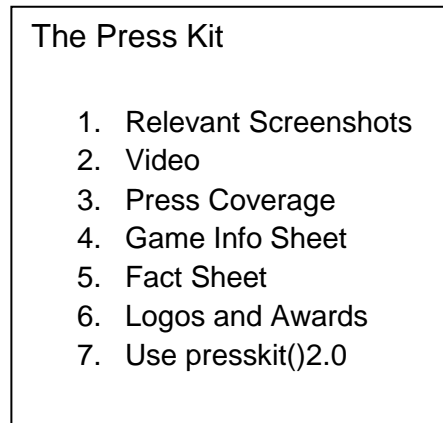


Figure 1. The Press Kit (DellaFave, R. 2013).

It is really good to have all chosen social media channels covered and link them together in early stages. These are things advised to be done before release.

Main effort should always be concentrated on launch date and the following days in order to reach highest possible download rate for better discoverability. In our case App Store optimization must be done to improve discoverability, before the app is launched. By this time many statistical tools are good to be in place, such as App Annie, which just acquired Distimo according to their homepage news on 28 May 2014.

During launching days, all promotion campaigns are put into effect. The climate for advertising is currently changing in the mobile industry and new ad networks are currently forming up in Facebook and twitter for mobile ads, as informed in the news article by Van Grove, J. 2014 "Facebook, Google, Twitter in new scrum over mobile app ad gold rush". Cross-promotion Ads and partnerships are still valid no matter the climate change. Indie game lists help you find similar genre games.

Cross-Promotion between apps is good way of advertising and it naturally starts on launch day. Indie game lists by genre should help with locating possible

partners. In the web or on location advertising in various happenings with little campaign surely boosts download rate as well. As your products are growing into a franchise, selling trademarks, TV-commercials and other major investments like Angry Birds Theme Park may become reality.

Playable demos are more popular in the console markets than in the mobile industry, but one might consider having a demo and a chance for a fully paid version to show the full experience when dealing with the press, social media hubs.

It is important to share the best you have. Choosing a relevant screenshots and making a good trailer are one of the top most important things you need to do. These are the things you are going to share to your audience and press alike.

- Contact tips

 1. The Subject Line
 2. Structure
 3. Bullet Points
 4. The tone
 5. The conclusion
 6. Attachments

Figure 2. Contacting the Press via email (DellaFave, R. 2013).

Next big thing is to know who and how to contact the people who after all are your gateway to be known. These people most likely get numerous of requests, so it is very important to be as clear and relevant with the information as possible with some perks. When dealing daily business, casual tone works the best. All starts from as basics as choosing your subject like for the email to the actual title of game. Everything should be pointed out clearly and should be easily viewed and contain all relevant information. Bullet points and written conclusion will help your cause as it is easier to forward for them. It is also best to keep all information in one place, so you should send clear commonly known format attachments in the

mail as well, not only links to random pages with weird addresses for recipients security reasons alone.

Who to contact mainly depends on which gaming platform you develop your game for and the genre of gaming you focus on or the channels, services and websites your wanted audience uses. Some journalists are specialized on specific genre. Some of the gaming sites are dedicated to only certain platform(s) and not all marketing services are free. You can send your game demo and info to contests and reviews to get noted, like Annual Independent Games Festival. 16th was arranged in San Francisco, California 2014. It is also good to list yourself to Indie Database and note social hubs like Reddit section for Indie Games. There are also many gaming conventions such as PAX Prime and PAX Dev, where you can meet your audience and other devs with your own marketing kit during same whole event. It is also possible to participate to Game Jams. In Finland Assembly has been a cornerstone for Finnish gamers since 1992. The next Assembly Summer 2014 is at Helsinki Exhibition & Convention Centre (Messukeskus) 31.7-3.8.



Figure 3. Online Presence (Gauchet, S. 2014).

Post release marketing is important when dealing with audience. This includes interaction with customers and analyzing them alike. People expect to be able to have a dialogue with the devs. What sells, what does not, is analyzed with various

tools and special campaigns or competitions are put in place to expand game lifecycle and possibly correct wanted things now or in the future. Also posting news about relevant information such as reaching ten thousand or hundred thousand downloads.

Finland has fundraising laws, which prevents Finnish companies to use crowdsourcing services for collecting funds from individuals in internet as mentioned in legislative database Finlex by Finland's Ministry of Justice.

3 VIRALITY TRIGGERS

3.1 Six Buttons

According to Mark Hughes 2005 – Buzz Marketing, there is universal formula how to make your content known and make people respond and talk about your content that are most spoken about.

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 1. Taboo | labeled by a society as improper, unacceptable, prohibited or profane |
| 2. Unusual | not usual, common, or ordinary; uncommon in amount or degree; exceptional |
| 3. Outrageous | passing reasonable bounds, shocking, unconventional, extravagant |
| 4. Hilarious | arousing great merriment; funny |
| 5. Remarkable | notable, extraordinary, worthy of notice or attention |
| 6. Secrets | kept from the knowledge of any but the initiated or privileged |

Figure 4. Definitions of the six buttons (Hughes, M. 2005).

According to Hughes, M. 2005 there are totally 6 buttons which are proven to be the topics. These buttons can be perceived as either positive or negative. It is important to understand, when you implement these advices – negativity may work against you especially in promoting business. These buttons work for people in general.

In our case society can be perceived as a group of average 30 year old American males. One way of reaching them is create something that they would perceive as Taboo. This would basically mean having an age –restricted game, which would enable game to be advertised consistently. This basically means that promoting a

game in which the art, story and characters would be without these attributes should not be advertised as such either. Illogical and inconsistent promotion will alienate the customers. Having one improper joke on the other hand, does not really open doors for such advertisement either.

Attracting customers with unusual methods is seen all the time with new innovative marketing campaigns. It can be also uncommon twist or mechanics in game or just unusual, but positive way how to deal with your social media. The newest different PR campaign seen was from Ubisoft, when it released Watch Dog in May 2014. In this attempt, a bomb squad was called in due to a misunderstanding when sending a promotion package to normal Press, wrongly perceived as a bomb.

Provoking your audience with shocking and potentially outrageous information will surely lift some eyebrows and get people talking. According to Hughes, M. 2005 this works better when the product and the outrageousness share connection.

People make fun on everything, but in general and public tone, there is always a limit on how far you can go especially in business, to prevent alienating the audience. Creating fun content might be considered easy when advertising games since they are all meant to be fun in their own way. Something as small as a funny explosion can keep some of the audience entertained for hours. But not all games are meant to be anti-serious, in these cases fun can be made other, more intelligent ways. Sometimes it just takes one object to be funnily placed after the physics engine positions them into weird locations, conjugated unrealistically or acting as a “party body”. Thanks to the internet, many companies have started to use funny internet based memes as their muse when creating new advertisements and commercials. This is a good way when transforming fun web advertising to television. But trends are changing constantly and people get bored faster to new things due to constant access to information flow.

If something is awesome, it will spread like a wildfire. It can be anything from a notable player achievement to information about new upcoming content. Remarkable is perceived as something that adds positive value to the gaming experience or to the community in our situation.

Many companies are reluctant to open their doors to outsiders. Secrets are commonly considered as intriguing. In order to make people interested about your secrets, a plan is needed, first of all, to get to be successful and well known in the industry and create something that attracts people. The process to this always starts when the company is formed. All happenings inside your company can be documented as they go for later marketing purposes.

Furthermore according to Hughes, M. 2005, it is really important to control the flow of information inside your company when creating a buzz – negative word of mouth spreads much faster than positive buzz. Basically this means that if you fail in something, you must assume without control everyone hears about it. This might be considered as pure as basic PR that gives your company favorable image and acts as a liaison between the funders and the actual devs. Delegation and clear guideline helps when dealing with both. Continuous marketing research and development - which also helps with risk management aspects, using different statistical tools in social channels and homepages, are more closely discussed on chapters to come.

3.2 Seven Emotions

All of these six buttons create an emotional response and furthermore, the buzz. Going viral is currently seen as the key for success in Social Medias. According to Jonah Berger and Katherine Milkman in their Marketing research Journal piece for the University of Pennsylvania “What makes Online Content Viral”, research suggest the following conclusions:

1. Positive content works better than negative content overall
2. Content that evokes both positive or negative high-arousal emotions is more viral than one without
3. Articles that are perceived useful in practice by their readers is well shared

In business purposes, in my opinion, devs are better off sharing useful information to their audience of gamers. Also in the social media point of view, when you share some information for your respective gamers, some interaction between the company and the customers is expected –and is rather wanted. In some games this could be perceived as daily bonuses as in games like Criminal Case FB, or other shared bonuses. It can also be as simple as a funny tutorial or a teaser trailer from speed runs or other things that would trigger social activity and highly positive feelings. Some Game Companies have a specific person to deal with this task, some integrate this inside the valued animation and coding time. Coordination however is always important as it is the devs who create the trailers and videos, unless content is fan made. Using fan based opportunity to share their opinions, feelings, suggestions and other fan content is considered also increasing customer satisfaction. A Facebook page can be used as a tool when interacting with your customers.

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awe 2. Anger 3. Anxiety 4. Fear 5. Joy 6. Lust 7. Surprise |
|---|

Figure 5. The 7 High-Arousal Emotions (Berger, J. & Milkman, K. 2011).

It is important to make sure that when releasing some sort of information or when launching a campaign, how to respond to certain kind of feedback, wanted or unwanted attention and continue to have a consistent tone you are delivering certain kind of information with, to avoid any negative impact by the company's own actions. This could be perceived as a certain kind of social etiquette when dealing with colleagues, competitors and partners with respect, always.

According to Garcia, I. 2014, in his post in socialmediatoday.com it is important to understand unspoken behavior and habits. This includes understanding great work

done by others and be able to recognize it out loud. Sharing and following and supporting each other carries a long way. Simple praise of others does not make one less respected, believable or influential either. Consistency is important in ever-changing environment no matter the tools. Company values and personality should not be affected by such changes. Answer to the comments of community when you feel the need, not out of obligation and be sure you have some relevant information rather than just something you feel like you need to say. You can deal with trolls or unwanted information in any given way but need to remember that it might evoke similar forceful response. Dealing with social media is largely consisting of acting and reacting.

4 MARKETING DATA

4.1 Data Analysis

There are many different tools devs can use to track the success of their game. Some of them can be used to track customer behavior – how they download and use your content and when. Commonly people play more on their free time and often evenings and weekends are when people play the most. Time and place can vary from genre to platform so your own statistical tools are more than wanted. They also allow you to see if you are making any profit or not and when it is time to move to next projects.

In Eric Benjamin Seufert articles for Mobile Dev Memo in late 2013, he suggests Ten Commandments for user acquisition and for app analytics. In order to get noticed in the growing competition, it is important to get your target audience to notice you especially near the launch date and keep them satisfied. Track all relevant data concerning your app to make it happen.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{LTV} &= \text{ARPU} \times \text{average amount of months a user stays active} \\ &= \text{Monthly Revenue} / \text{MAU} \times \text{average amount of months a user stays active} \end{aligned}$$

Figure 6. How to calculate Life Time Value of a game.

More MAU (Monthly Active Users) the merrier. It is important to know how much you can spend to user acquisition for making a profit. LTV (Life Time Value) and ARPU (Average Revenue per User) should be displayed at least by device type and/or geographically. This helps to validate with CPI (Cost per Install) to evaluate from different ad networks and shows if they are profitable or if any attributes for campaigns should be changed. CPI should ultimately be lower than LTV. To know the size of the budget needed to achieve at least some level of virality, eCPI is the value. But need to remember that some of the installs are acquired freely from

status updates and invites, which is non-paid growth; Infection Rate x Conversion Rate = K Factor. Basically if you spend more money on CPI (acquiring new user) than get ARPU (Revenue per user), further analysis of marketing attributes and monetizing methods needs to be done. Performance-based mobile marketing is the key. You also want to know your traffic peaks and largest cohorts. Most important is retention rate, which measures gamer return rate for using the app.

You will...

1. Know your LTV
2. Diversify your campaign networks
3. Not assume featuring
4. Thoroughly A/B test Ad creative
5. Calculate eCPI
6. Overbook your launch
7. Not overestimate the organic effect of chart position
8. Focus on effective channels
9. Not rely on incentivized installs
10. Soft launch

Figure 7. Commandments of Mobile User Acquisition (Seufert, E. B. 2013).

As mobile advertising networks are currently in the works, diversifying ad campaigns should be easier in the future. Twitter and Facebook announced in May 2014 their plans for an advertising network within their service, according to Van Grove, J. 2014. This means advertising is clearer in their channels.

Advertising across multiple networks during release date is crucial. Networks should be chosen as non-aggregated as possible. By analyzing CTR (Click-through rate) the traffic between ad networks helps you to understand which network is working for you the best during launch, campaigns or as simple as weekends.

Multiple games are released weekly. This is a reason why you should not assume to be featured in your distributor store. It is awesome if it happens for sure, but having a versatile plan beyond relying on featuring, is the most important thing.

Overbooking your launch date with advertising is advised when dealing with games that are dependent on the amount of installs especially multiplayer games. According to Seufert, E.B. 2013, overbooking may increase the budget by 10-20%, but ultimately not securing more downloads during release might be far more costly in the long run. Reaching a certain download threshold is important to any game to get noticed in various rank tables to get more visibility. Top ranked games are more likely to get noted, especially if it is made by a trusted author or it is as simple as a top chart. It gives you a boost, but relying on ranks for advertisement only, is not good idea. Different advertisement campaigns can be designed to give boost to download rate, such as giving away free codes either digitally or physically. But analysis wise, it is important to remember that these installs cannot be assumed to result in any new traffic (eCPI).

It is important to track data between different user acquisition (UA) methods and be able to correct attributes in any chosen ad networks and focus more on successful ones. Many small companies use the majority, if not all, of their advertisement budget during the first few days. Some of the companies do a soft launch and acquire Beta-testers to collect data which is used to improve their game further for any given reason before global launch, as tested is any product before putting it into global markets.

You will...

1. Thoroughly track the first session
2. Segment users based on behavior
3. Own your data
4. Not A/B test endlessly
5. Establish a realistic LTV timeline
6. Not fixate on industry benchmarks
7. Get an analyst
8. Clearly define your metrics
9. Not react drastically to Real-Time Metrics
10. Learn from your mistakes and your successes

Figure 8. 10 Commandments of Mobile App Analytics (Seufert, E. B. 2013).

4.2 Delegation

According to Kim, J. 2013, the data analyzed can be approached in two ways, who is viewing the data (Role) and what are you using the data for (Application).

He suggests that the key data to measure can be perceived in four categories; Audit, User Acquisition, Optimization and Anti-Hacking.

Application	Role	Key Types of Metrics
Audit	CEO, Executive Producer	Key User, Monetization, Retention
	Producer, PM	Detail User, Monetization, Retention, Engagement, Social, Progression, Content
	Developer	Stability, Performance
User Acquisition (UA)	Marketing	Key User, Monetization, Retention, Social, User Data, Source/User Attribution
Optimization (Balancing, Tuning)	Producer	Core User, Monetization, Retention, Engagement, Social, User Progression, Content, Activity, Key Funnels
	Systems Engineer	Detail User, Monetization, Retention, Engagement, Social, User Progression, Content, User Flows, Activity, Funnels, Sources & Sinks
Anti-Hacking	Producer	Key Alerts
	Developer	Detail Alerts, User Behavior

Figure 9. Ideal Divisions in Game Companies (Kim, J. 2013).

Categorized attributes are for traceable data that affects the gamer experience inside your app and by evaluating them you can find out how to maximize your profits. Many of the marketing features require coding in the app itself. As simple as “buy me” icon requires work within the app itself. Digitally delivering a digital product to customers’ digital platform, this sentence alone should explain the importance of communications. Successfully selling out of place items in a digital environment may not pan out either. When monetizing with F2P method, tracking data inside the game is more valuable, than fully prepaid games.

As this work is targeted for the Marketing Department, UA perspective, it is good to analyze information on source effectiveness and do source and user attribution. This is how you get information on how effective your one currency is when acquiring new users.

Key types of metrics can be defined in the following way:

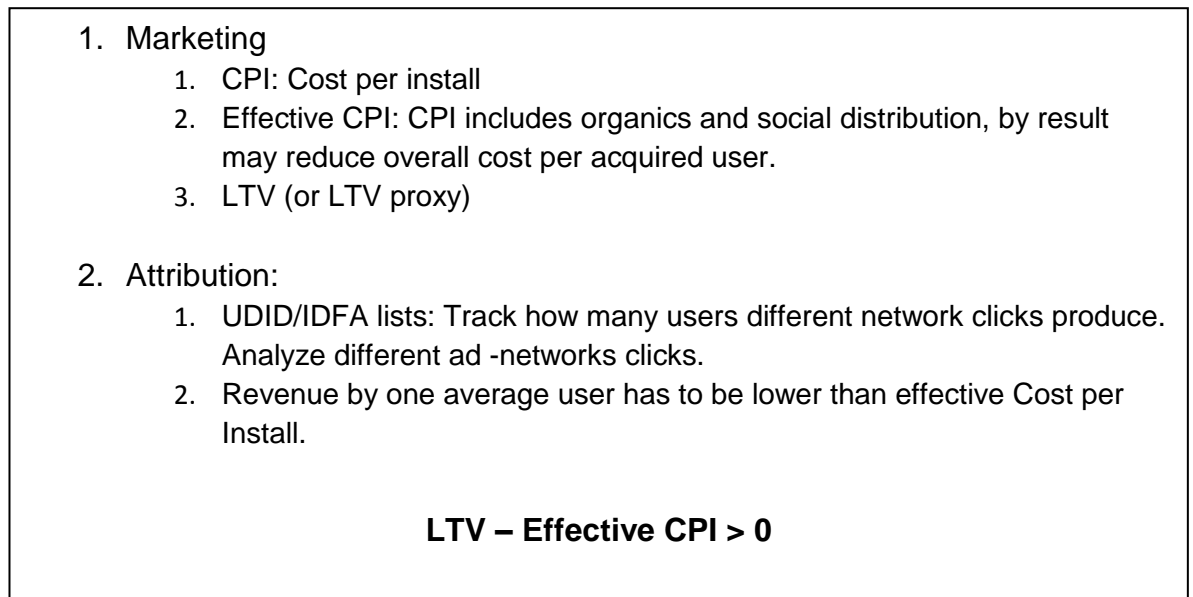


Figure 10. User Acquisition Role, Marketing Role (Kim, J. 2013).

It is really important not to overestimate the LTV. It can lead to increase in UA costs per install for nothing, which lowers your revenue. It is also recommended to review this data by networks – you cannot apply the eCPI from a strongly performing channel to a poorly performing one. Make sure you know the traffic in the places where you do advertising at. By saying this, it is important to recognize different attributes in various networks to either boost, adjust or leave them out of marketing campaigns.

It is also worth mentioning that this may not affect the top grossing games as much as starting companies due to the fact of massively increased free social word-of-mouth marketing and other popularity and sharing mechanisms.

Understanding the analysis behind a game, as well as the following list, deep understanding is required on various aspects in gaming, from long experience as a player to various methods developing games.

How long does it take to advance to perceived milestones in various games that might even have all of the following progression methods; PvE, PvP or during special XP campaigns -weekends? How are users spending their time while using your app and features that they are attracted towards the most? How much users or money do these features produce? Does the item with certain attributes make the game character too overpowered, which may cause negative non-paying player experience?

These few handpicked questions are some of the ones that analyzing data should give an answer to. As data analysis is one of the most important things after release, I have added a list for the three other apps by Kim, J. 2013 to Appendix 3 for further use.

5 STRATEGY

Sylvain Gauchet, co-founder and author of mobile app marketing specialist service apptamin.com, has written several articles on iOS mobile marketing. He has written the article “The iOS App Marketing Strategy Guide” that clearly presents the following points for your benefit. I will go through these steps one by one.

1. Develop right kind of game and do it right
2. Find out what makes your gamers to return
3. Listen to feedback from users and other devs
4. Build online presence
 - a. Use video
 - b. Use Facebook
5. Engage people and develop interest
6. Optimize ASO and SEO
7. Reach out the right way
8. Do cross—promotion
9. Choose right campaigns
10. Browse alternative app stores
11. Measure and analyze everything

Figure 11. Checklist for topics following (Gauchet, S. 2013).

First of all, no matter what your personal feelings are regarding social media, you have to establish a presence in the internet. This is how you get to be known and will get to know people in the industry. Get contacts, like and share channels where you can get useful information. In Facebook you can follow pages like Indy App & Game Developers or App Entrepreneurs and Marketers.

When creating a new idea, it is important to know there is a market for your app. You can do market research to validate your idea.

Choosing a revenue model, the price of the app and the in-game shop are your main source of income and should be treated as such. People have certain tendencies and behavior patterns and knowing them will help you maximize your profit.

Choosing your app a name, App Store optimization (ASO) and search engine optimizing (SEO), all goes hand in hand. It is important, especially if going for practical apps, that the name gives an impression for what the app is designed for. Apple store uses your app name and 99 characters for the keywords. There are services such as AppCodes, Sensor Tower, MobileDevHQ and SearchMan that help you to determine if the characters are used well. According to Sylvain Gauchet 2014 it is “better to be in the top five results for an average-searched keyword than in the top hundred for a highly-searched keyword. Remember that each search engines use their own keywords and they need to be properly reviewed. Optimize other search engines in the web as well, such as Google and Yahoo. According to Hesh, D. 2014 in Apptamin, as he believes, that SEO carries you further than ASO.

As here are countless games in the market, you need to make sure your game’s user interface (UI) is clear and does not require an excessive tutorial. If your game does not make sense in the first thirty seconds it is possible that your game ends up being uninstalled. You can measure this by Alpha and Beta Testing or with different kinds of feedback features, and of course. For the feedback you can use either email or a tweet link or an in app software development kit (SDK) such as Apptentive, Appbooster or Appboy as on mobile devices it might not be so convenient to open a link to your mobile email programs like on the PC. As all this goes to design of the game, so do other sharing mechanisms as well.

You need to make sure people can share their fun easily to their friends as the goal is that they will become your free marketers. Customers need to be able to easily click themselves to your website and share stuff in social media. As trends are constantly changing, and also my personal preference for not having the need to add multiple random friends and do a complex transformation into a gaming account. This means creating a separate friend list for each game to keep from harassing your actual friends with random game spam. For example sharing game progress (spam the game progress) in order to proceed in the game might not be a good idea anymore. Choosing a progress method in the future the game needs to be properly scouted. As gaming is considered as a service as well, they have to be able to contact you with an easy link within the app as well. This is because

people will rate your product with only a few stars in iOS more likely if their plea cannot reach you. Getting a good rating for your game in Apple Store is really important.

Tracking actions within your app will determine if game features or various campaigns are successful or not, which gives you the opportunity to concentrate on the channels or features that are under- or over performing. I would like to think that retention has more to do with the game itself than various marketing campaigns, but there is a fine line on what is marketing and what is not. The game has to be advertised with the whole gaming experience, features and its UI.

But the UI alone is not enough. First people need to find your app from among the innumerable games in the App Store, where of course you have to have your search words optimized. You need to find other people who are interested in sharing information about new exiting games to their audience; bloggers, critics and journalists or even paid reviews.

It can also be an ordinary person, who has a great deal of followers in a specific social channel. One can start from researching a popular game genre social channels by their follower amount and making sure their genre and style matches your wanted ones. But it is also said that any kind of word-of-mouth is better than not at all.

With the help of Persson, M. Attachment 1, List of Game Review Sites was compiled. The first list is picked from PixelProspector.com, mobile reviews only. The sites listed are online as of date 20 May 2014 and produce traffic or are not acquired by other services. The second list is compiled from PixelProspectcor.com, The Indie Goldmine as well as from metacritic.com, which both are hubs for various platforms, critics and their readers. With help of Alexa.com, traffic could be determined for top listed review sites. Finally the pages with less than 50.000 hits were removed, as well as sites that are offline or do not feature iOS or Mobile games.

YouTube is also a powerful tool and there are many individuals doing game reviews within their service. Video Game Caster.com should help you find critics

for various genres and platforms. According to Video Game Caster, there are not many who do Mobile Games. Researching YouTube channel development is relevant now and in the future.

One needs to remember that in order to launch any campaign for gaining recognizability, all the basics have to be in order. In my opinion, any virality hype will not lead to anything stable if the foundation is not there. It means that you have to have your own websites, social channels and video service online before you start to direct people towards your direction. Otherwise in lack of wanted information, you will be forgotten as fast as the interest rose to begin with.



Figure 12. Proper link -icons for stores (May 2014).

Information given on your homepage should describe your product as well as possible and make it as easy as possible for the customer to get answer to any common question gamers might have in general before they are willing to download your game. These include the name, a catchy sales pitch, genre, visual introduction, support, social media, download links and to see what other players think. The most important visual item to be found in the page is a link where to get your product; without any downloads, there will be no revenue. It is also noteworthy that different regions use their own stores. Meaning you cannot download a game in Finland from a US Apple store link. For the author it remains currently unknown if Apple Store provides a global link that detects the region

automatically for the right store or are third party services such as Georiot needed in affiliation with LinkShare, Tradedoubler and DGM Pro. Using these third party services, according to Sylvain Gauchet 2013, might increase your app or in app purchase additional 5%.

New call-to-action trend concerning downloads is developing. Several websites have a service where a customer enters their phone number in the web and then receive a SMS with a link to the app. There are three justifications for this new trend. 1. This is a good way to provide the game easily to the customer phone if they are browsing with other devices than the iOS platform –they do not have to find it again nor transfer any file from the computer to the platform. 2. Unless the message is deleted, they will always have the link in their phone if they want to return to the game. 3. You can detect which platform was used when the link was requested and send a corresponding platform link automatically or just send both links in one message. Twilio is one service to help you with this and you can implement it with several code languages. You can measure the feature's success like any other action made in your homepage. The system is not foolproof though as in some devices such as the iPod and iPad, receiving SMS is not possible nor all dare to give their phone number out freely.

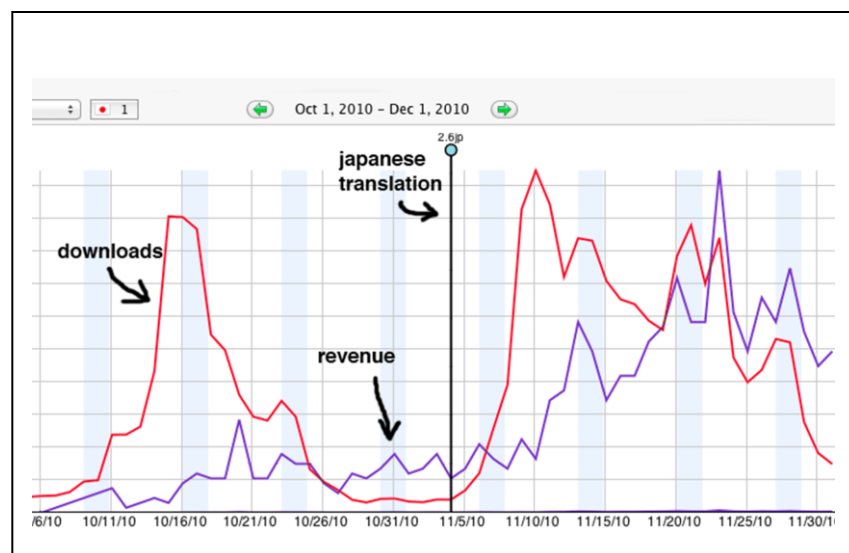


Figure 13. Downloads after Japanese translation (Johnson, M. 2012).

Any link to news concerning the game and the company are good to be displayed as well. If you have any other games published, you should add link to them as well. Blogging about the development process also interest a portion of customers. But you need to make sure that your blog nor your homepage and social channels are not boring and filled with errors. No one wants to neither read that nor believe after failing in internet basics that you will be able to write error free code or provide anything worth their while.

If not anything else, you can add a possibility for the players to join a news list to gain the latest information concerning your product immediately when you publish it. This is already acceptable when the game is not yet published. According to Sylvain Gauchet 2013, devs still do not use mailing lists enough. Like and follow feature in social channels are equivalent. Make sure that any information you give is easily shared in any social channel where at least you (should already) have a presence in. Through these channels you can ask valuable feedback with the help of some contest as well as with in app software previously mentioned.

Many of these features as well as the game itself can be useless for a wide range of players if the game is not localized for specific language. Not everyone manage English and many even prefer to play the game in their own language. But many people as well as myself, I prefer English platforms, apps and even my mobile is in English. Reason for this is lack of good translations and many terms are poorly translated. There is a service called Smooth Localize for translation. Many devs also ask for help from their followers. According to Mark Johnson in his blog “Is translating your iOS Game Cost Effective”2012, localization can improve:

1. Chance someone will tap on your app listing when browsing (if you translate the app name)
2. Download rate (if you translate the app name and screen shots)
3. Amount of fun a customer has with your game (if you localize the app itself)
4. Chance they will buy an IAP. (if you localize the app itself)
5. Chance they will recommend to their friend. (if you localize the app itself)
6. Chance of getting Apple promotions in non-English markets. (if you localize the app itself)

There are also services such as Buffer which makes it possible for you to delay, as in localize, your twitter messages to the audience per region, so you do not have to be awake in Finland in order to tweet in prime time in the US.

Cross-promotion between different apps is very popular and an effective method for acquiring new users. If you have previous games you should cross-promote yourself. A hub for Finnish devs neogames.fi gives reference for plausible cross-promotion partners. You also can directly contact fellow dev companies or use a service called TapForTap, which lets you do free click exchanges between devs. As introduction goes, you show adds to other apps and earn credits and you can spend those credits to your own app.

Marketing through different channels, as in advertisement networks inside various social channels, could be the most challenging feature in marketing. Advertisement channels as well as cross-promotion need constant analysis to see which channels are performing the best including what hours during the week your game performs the best. Apps like Tapstream and Yozio will help you with this.

Later on when your app has been released, there are various campaigns you can launch in order to improve your in app sales and downloads. These can include everything from fan art contests to give away codes. By this time all systems should be implemented and data traceable. Without data to track you might have no certainty which campaign is working the best or the date to launch the campaign. But needless to say, most of the people do not work on weekends and all have holidays. Software such as Flurry Analytics and App Annie helps you to track data. These are Gauchet, S.2012 first choices on mobile analytics.

6 METHODOLOGY

As the interview is supposed to give a general description about daily routines inside the marketing department, designing the interview is done with open questions. They are designed to give answers to the more general questions about daily, but necessary routines, which of course are important within the department. Getting this information is not possible without asking from a person within. For the relevance, I have added questions, if not for anything else but to give confirmation for knowledge previously acquired. Typically interviews are done by mail, phone or in person and are either structured or unstructured.

6.1 Interview

After plenty of professional discussions with Persson, M. Founder and Media Director for Team Dignitas, my personal research and experience, I chose the web-based survey engine eSurvey to obtain information and confirmation. I chose an internet based survey engine for its convenience and speed. Survey engines has become popular due to their flexibility and clear structure advantages. In eSurvey.com, it has one month of free evaluation. The service includes countless of configurations to construct any kind of interview or questionnaire. Each answer can be browsed, displayed or printed in many forms. It may be possible to get several answers by the hour, if your survey goes viral. Nevertheless, in my timeframe getting as much as five answers will give me satisfaction, for the knowledge attained. Data to be attained is not relevant for larger statistics. The goal is to get some vision about a typical day in a marketing department inside their company, not any numerical information.

Asking the right question in the right way is the most important things to be done besides choosing the right tool and method. A semi-structured interview demands a good design of the questions to prevent any bias and a sample is chosen to correlate with the survey. Designing an interview to be as validating as possible can be done by asking specific questions, which might be the turning point when analyzing the results, as in experience or title. In this interview there are low-turning points such as asking the title or experience from at least iOS platform.

The design of my interview structure was clear. My goal was not to ask too complicated questions to ease the answers. I still gave participants a possibility to tell me everything as openly or short as possible, and the last question was to freely tell me anything they like.

One little change to the settings was bound to be done; changing cookie- based settings off to make it possible to return to the questionnaire later – I cannot assume people using a special returning code or knowing how to clean cookies to start over. The goal is to get as many answers as possible from marketing departments in game companies.

The challenge was to find proper channels and contacts where to distribute the survey. Järvinen, S. Game Artist at Housemarque was of great help distributing the survey to their Marketing Department as well as giving advice for further contacts such as neogames.com, from which I picked mobile game devs and sent them mail personally.

7 RESULTS OF THE INTERVIEW

(1-14) number of the question in Appendix 4-2.

Links to services and apps in the results can be found in Appendix 4-4.

A possibility to get the interview results via email after it is closed was given (1). All of the five participants wanted to have the results sent to them. But in the end I noticed that one participant, Game Designer & Author with ten years of experience had answered only partially and thus I will not officially use him as a participant. However, his long career and his interesting answers for a few questions were interesting. I added P5 answers to Appendix 4-3.

Note for the results; for structural reasons, I have corrected my mistake for the presentation of the answers. I have moved Question twelve (12) to be presented with Question two (2) to give an impression about participants' background and thus give more perspective when the results are given. It is also important to note that participants number two (P2) and three (P3) are from the same company. This is important to recognize when comparing possible percentage on the amount of how many companies would for example use Facebook; they are twice the same company and overlaps must be excluded. Otherwise the tasks they are doing in their respective roles are still valid tasks for the game company itself. Participant four (P4) has experience from various platforms. The results can be analyzed by individual experience, partial anonymity gained. Participants are not listed in any specific order.

Role	Exp. / iOS
P1 CEO	1 / yes
P2 Community & PR Manager	3 / yes
P3 Intern	0 / no
P4 Creative Director	5 / no

Figure 14. Participants of the Survey.

After handpicking the persons from the mobile game companies to whom I sent the interview to, given the subject, asking if they have been working in iOS marketing department (2), is necessary for validity. Luckily the first two of the four participants have worked in the iOS environment. Participants three and four have not worked in an iOS department, but one of them has five years of experience.

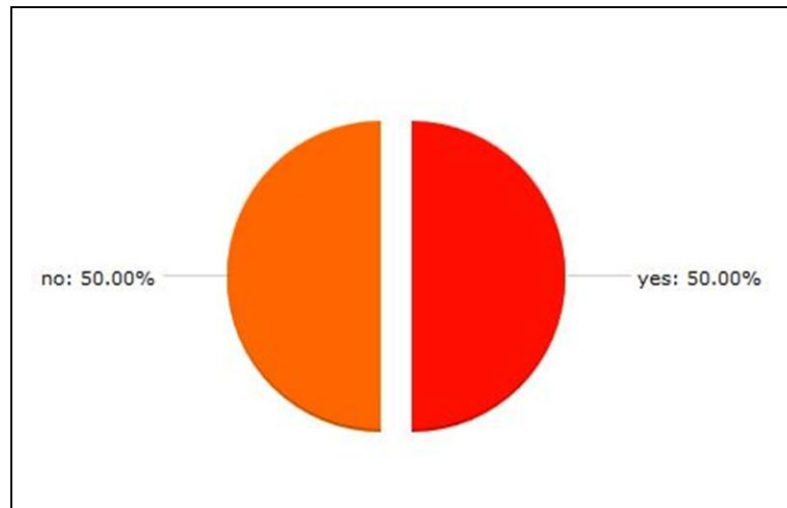


Figure 15. Do you work or have you worked in an iOS marketing department?

In later interview I asked of the participants their background in the business (12). Among them is P1 CEO of a game company with one year or experience, P2 Community & PR Manager with three years of experience, P3 an intern and P4 Creative Director with five years.

Three of four most experienced our participants' daily routines includes management (3). P2 answered Community Check, social media updates. The channels Facebook, Twitter were mentioned for P1 and P4. In addition for P4, browsing social groups, Reddit and daily tweeting were mentioned. P3 takes part in video editing, marketing and updates.

To help their daily tasks all of them use (4) different tools. P1: browser, Twitter Android-app. P2: Twitter and FB native apps, TweetAtlas, Meltwater Buzz, forum. P3: Adobe product family, Asana, Hansoft, Irc and Facebook. P4: Socialbro and some other widgets not mentioned.

As their main research data tool there were some overlaps (3) with previous question two. P1: Google Analytics. P2: Analytic tools in Facebook. P3: TweetAtlas, Meltwater Buzz, FB Insights. P4: Game Analytics, App Annie, Excell.

- TweetAtlas	- Facebook Insights
- Meltware Buzz	- Game Analytics
- Asana	- App Annie
- Hansoft	- Vine
- SocialBro	- Instagram
- Google Analytics	- ChartBoost

Figure 16. All Apps, tools and services mentioned by participants.

I asked what is in their opinion, the top most important data and needs most attention (6). This means any data in general. In P1 opinion quality of the new content is first to be mentioned. In his opinion consistency and the rate of updates are of the most importance. P2 thinks more analytic and goes for UA prices and retention for revenue. P3 in the other hand goes for social media and creating material and communication. P4 mentions specifically the functionality of the banners and icons, click/install ratio. He goes a little bit deeper with retention rate by adding specific questions on which to look answer for; when players quit, do they return, did they uninstall and what was the last action they made in the game, what leads to contributions (Facebook shares, ads, micropayments).

As the seventh question asked to highlight something more specific, most useful data when making decisions (7), what they refer the most to. P1 felt that all data from Google Analytics is the most valuable for example making sure that people actually read their blog updates or people at least spend enough time to read the blog. P2 opinion simply looking at data in general is the way to go. P3 thinks visibility and positive reputation is the most important and highlighting working at the grass root level; minimum input and maximum output. P4 feels he would repeat his previous answer.

Various social media channels play a large role in marketing, thus I asked who is responsible for social media (8). This also gives insight into their organization

structure. In P1 company everyone interested in it can do updates, mainly CEO and the Lead Artist. P2 is however responsible for their social media and focuses on Facebook and Twitter mostly with some Google+. P3 clarifies that the company uses Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Vine and his boss is responsible for such channels. P4 informs they have a special guy for the social media, but the dev team can freely chat in various boards and blogs. He also mentions that their company uses Twitter, Facebook, Reddit, Instagram and game forums and blogs not specified by name.

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facebook - Twitter - Reddit - Google+ - Blogs - Forums |
|---|

Figure 17. Social media channels in use by participants.

Question (9) could have been a little more specific since the structure does not give any guideline if work in social media in the present or the past covers personal usage or professional only in which I would have wanted the answer to. Either way, all of the participants (100%) answered yes.

Consistency is one important variable, which leads to the question on how often channels are updated (10). In P1 Company they aim to update their blog at least once in a week with larger content and in addition to that they update their Twitter and Facebook accounts when they feel the vibe for it. P2 updates social media channels several times a day without any specification on which he concentrates on the most. P3 suggests they update at least once in a day, but P2, his colleague and boss answer overrides his answer and in my opinion, needs to be disregarded.

I was also interested on game companies' special campaigns in social media, some highlights (11). P1 however informs that they are in such an early stage of development that they have had no time for such plans. P2, who is responsible for

social media, tells they have not had any paid campaigns. They strongly feel that posting good content often does a good job with engagement without the need to pay for exposure. P3 is clearly really hyped on their plausible previous and current campaign by answering “Yes!” and continues by informing that their campaigns have included T-shirt campaigns, various contests, videos and streams. He tells that they strive to have a really close relationship with their fans. P4 simply says no.

Question twelve (12) has been presented along with question two (2).

Cross-promotion and the structures of partnerships are important as companies can support each other. The question of what type of cross-promotion or other possible kind of co-op they do with other companies (13). P1 shares they are interested about middleware cross-promotion solution by Chartboost. He also says that they know many other devs, who are using the platform in question, with whom they could agree to have so called direct deals. P2 reveals they have some cross-promotion in their games. He also tells they that are featuring some characters in other titles. P3 job description does not include cross-promotion. P4 answer is “yes”.

As a last point, I wanted to give the participant an opportunity to inform me on something they wish I need to know (14). P2 and P3 in their joint quest from their game company, already answered to all of the questions thoroughly, their forms were blanks for the things to add. P1 and P4 had some enlightening bonus information they wanted to share. P1 shares that he feels gaining visibility for an unpublished game in social media requires daily effort, and despite heavy effort they have not gained more than of few hundred of users. P4 has some philosophical thoughts to add in the end; “When the mobile industry grows bigger, the small become even smaller in the infinite sea of free to play games.”

8 CONCLUSIONS

I got valuable information from the survey; the informed me about new apps and services previously not mentioned by my sources. This inspired me to create a Bibliography for apps, services and terms by participants in Appendix 4 for their information to be easier to access.

Question six (6) in my opinion produced the most interesting answers, given the structure of the question suggests also data in general. I think I can see a bit of Risk Management by noticing the answers. Participants supposedly have on strong unspecified reason to have a reason to put their extra attention to the task at hand.

It was really interesting to see that according to question eight (8) in companies that have been around longer, they have their own person for social media. In the company that had been founded in 2013, the CEO and the Lead Artists were mainly responsible for it suggesting they do not have a special person for marketing and the task is delegated to other departments.

As I assumed when I selected subject for the thesis, a high rate of activity in the social media is really important for visibility and the companies all do it. The one year old company focuses actively on development blogs as Chapter 2 Online Presence suggests in the second paragraph to be done before the game is released. All social media channels mentioned are currently stabilized mostly used channels. Campaigns are executed within these channels.

I feel the last question fourteen (14) was an invaluable extra as the participants reminded us about some really important facts inside the industry. As developing games in our society has become much easier than before, new companies are popping up constantly. It is really hard to get noticed and get audience. Dozens of games are released weekly and there is no end in sight. As far as the F2P genre goes, there is less and less room for any market share and revenue.

I am really waiting with great interest on what type of contribution methods the game industry will turn to next.

I am confident that my work can act as a strong guideline for any starting company. I am glad how the work turned out. But as I understand how extensive the whole industry is, I feel that my work is yet only scratching the surface. The game industry is far away from its peak. I personally wait with great enthusiasm the latest innovation to be released for commercial use; Oculus Rift, Morpheus and other technological developments in Virtual Reality Games.

A book by Montola, M & Stenros, J. & Waern A. Pervasive Games, Theory and Design, 2009, I found really intriguing but sadly I had to leave it out; it focuses more on game design than marketing. But the reason to mention it goes as follows; there is no marketing without game design. I strongly suggest finding this book if you are planning to enter game industry.

Finding follow-up topics was easy. I have offered a lot of information and tools which can be analyzed further and to be of wide range of use for marketing department and development. For any topics given, the thesis can be used to find source material at its minimum.

Plausible and Supportive Future Research:

1. Add-on research on game critic sites, contributions and cost-effect
2. In-depth Marketing Data Analysis –thought behind the data.
3. Game Company Finances. Laws and Taxes.
4. Ad network movement within Social Media –new standards and analysis.
5. Marketing Campaign Research on campaign implementations with given or more current applications and SDKs.

GLOSSARY

In order of appearance

OS	Operating system, like Windows, Linux or iOS for Apple.
Platform	Hardware with what to use the application with. Different platforms have different coding requirements.
PvP	Player versus Player.
Mechanics	Variables that loosely define how game proceeds forward.
Virality	The tendency of an image, video, or a piece of information to be circulated rapidly and widely from one Internet user to another.
App/s	Shortened from application/s. Software, a program; game or utility.
Indie	An Independent game developer.
Dev/s	Is a shortened name from developers. These are the people who make the game.
RSS	Feed idea is a program/service created to check a file that server provides where all new URLs are provided for server traffic. This means that user does not have to visit homepages manually, but configure a service that automatically picks up websites that are relevant to your needs and wants.
Cross-Promotion	The fact of advertising related products from different companies at the same time
Hub	A center around which other things revolve or from which they radiate, a meeting place for many.

Physics engine	A physics engine is computer software that provides an approximate simulation of certain physical system within given parameters in the game.
Party-body	Term for animated failure for hands and/or legs that act irrationally.
Speedrun	Completing the game as fast as possible, usually without any deaths and furthermore without receiving any damage. Typical YouTube material.
Troll	Person who hangs in Internet without any more specific reason than to just cause mayhem; less intelligent persons, who act irrationally in the Internet without them even realizing it themselves.
Soft launch	Launch of the game in stages, which enables receiving player feedback before actual launch date.
Beta testers	People who test the game before launch date.
F2P	Free to Play.
MAU	Monthly Active Users: The number of players who have interacted with a game in a given month
LTV	Life Time Value: The average amount of money spent by each player, including paying and nonpaying; calculation is $ARPU \times \text{average numbers of months a user remains active} = LTV$
APRU	Average Revenue per User: Measurement of how much a game is earning per player; this is normally quoted as a monthly number, so the calculation is $\text{Monthly Revenue} / MAU = ARPU$.

CPI	Cost per install: Paid user acquisition term in which acquirer is paying per completed install; this is usually the most costly of paid user acquisition methods due to the full conversion of use.
eCPI:	The effective price paid per user, which generates some level of virality
Infection Rate:	How much a given user exposes the game to other players, such as through status updates or email invites.
Conversion Rate:	Percentage of nonpaying players who become paying players with virtual currency, such as by making in-app purchases.
K Factor:	Measures the viral growth of a game. K Factor is calculated by multiplying the Infection Rate by Conversion rate.
Cohort:	A group of players who all played a game in the same time period, such as on the same day; calculating the retention rate requires users to be grouped into cohorts before they can be compared and analyzed.
Non-aggregated	Means a collection of many things that are all working on unique attributes and there is no overlapping. Meaning you advertise on one TV channel, one network that is working on Facebook etc.
Retention Rate:	Measurement that tells you the amount of users who sign up today and come back tomorrow and each day after that.

CTR	Click through Rate. Measurement to see how successful any given campaign has been in any source.
PvE	Player versus Enemy (computer AI).
XP	Also eXP. Experience Points. Used for game character advancement.
ASO	App store optimization.
SEO	Search engine optimization.
UI	User Interface, the part of the program player interacts with.
A/B Testing	Alpha and Beta Testing. Stages in game development. Alpha is usually closed app test before giving app to beta testing, which is more open to the customers.
SDK	Software Development Kit, which gives you the basic coding -tools (command lines) you need in order to attach some special feature into your own application. They are usually available with several code languages.

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APPENDIX 1. – Game Review Sites

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APPENDIX 2. – Dev Terms

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57 Terms for data analysis

I have added these in the end to give follow-up points for possible future research. Here are the most common terms used in this field.

Terms can be categorized under following titles:

1. **Metrics**
2. **General terms**
3. **Advertising terms and**
4. **Social behaviors**

1. Metrics

Retention Rate: Measurement that tells you the amount of users who sign up today and come back tomorrow and each day after that.

Cohort: A group of players who all played a game in the same time period, such as on the same day; calculating the retention rate requires users to be grouped into cohorts before they can be compared and analyzed.

CAC (Customer/User Acquisition Cost): All the money spent advertising to prospective players, divided by the number of new players you were able to acquire during that same time period.

CPM (Cost-per-Thousand Impressions): Common term in paid user acquisition contracts in which acquirer pays a certain amount for each 1000 views of an ad.

CPC (Cost per Click): Common paid user acquisition term in which acquirer pays per click.

CPA (Cost per Action/Acquisition): Paid user acquisition term in which acquirer is paying per user action, such as an email submit or app download.

eCPA: The effect of viral growth on the CPA. The eCPA is the real cost to acquire a new player. For a game to be a success the eCPA must be less than the LTV. In other words, the cost to get a new player into the game must be less than the player spends during their lifetime.

CPI (Cost per Install): Paid user acquisition term in which acquirer is paying per completed install; this is usually the most costly of paid user acquisition methods due to the full conversion of use.

Churn: The percentage of users who played last month who did not come back this month; the calculation is $1 - \text{retention rate} = \text{churn}$.

Duration: The number of months the average player plays your game; the calculation is $1/\text{churn}=\text{duration}$.

MAU (Monthly Active Users): The number of players who have interacted with a game in a given month.

DAU (Daily Active Users): The number of users who play the game on any given day; this is typically expressed as a monthly average.

Stickiness: The most important metric for engagement, measuring the number of days per month active users play the game. The calculation is DAU/MAU , so if the DAU is 1000 and the MAU is 2000, the game's stickiness is 50%. A range of 20-30% is considered good.

ARPU (Average Revenue per User): Measurement of how much a game is earning per player; this is normally quoted as a monthly number, so the calculation is $\text{Monthly Revenue}/\text{MAU} = \text{ARPU}$.

LTV (Life Time Value): The average amount of money spent by each player, including paying and nonpaying; calculation is $\text{ARPU} \times \text{average number of months a user remains active} = \text{LTV}$.

ARPDau (Average Revenue per Daily Active User): Common game monetization measurement that shows how game is performing day to day. A good ARPDau is at least \$0.15.

ARPPU (Average Revenue per Paying User): Measurement used in free-to-play/freemium games; calculates the amount spent by paying users only, so the total should be higher than ARPU.

Engagement: How frequently players interact with a game. The greater the engagement is, the greater the likelihood that they will purchase. Engagement is derived from DAU/MAU .

Infection Rate: How much a given user exposes the game to other players, such as through status updates or email invites.

K Factor: Measures the viral growth of a game. K Factor is calculated by multiplying the Infection Rate by the Conversion rate.

Virality: Measured by K Factor, the Viral Rate/Virality shows how many your users are promoting, evangelizing and spreading your game, the tendency to be spread by word-of-mouth.

Conversion Rate: Percentage of nonpaying players who become paying players with virtual currency, such as by making in-app purchases.

2. General Terms

Addressable Market Size: The number of people who could become players of a game.

AppStore: An online store for downloading apps. Major app stores include Apple's AppStore, Google Play Store, and Amazon AppStore.

IAP (In App Purchases): Virtual goods or upgrades that can be purchased within a game or app, usually in free-to-play games.

Casual Game: Games that typically feature simple rules and controls, increasing levels of difficulty featuring light, non-difficult and sometimes short-duration gameplay.

A/B testing: Also known as **split testing**, A/B testing involves testing two small changes to your creative, website or game on a live service and measuring which performs better by equally splitting traffic.

Multivariate Testing: Involves identifying a few key areas/sections of creative, of a website or of a game and then creating variations for those sections specifically. (As opposed to creating variations of a whole creative series, website or game in an A/B or split testing).

Positive Unit Economics: This means you are profitable when it comes to app monetization, since it indicates your LTV is greater than CAC.

Vanity Metrics: These are metrics that do not necessarily indicate success in the app monetization world, but some companies like to track them and boast about them anyway. Examples include the number of game registrations to date, total hours played, total items purchased with virtual currency, number of concurrent users, and likes.

Virtual Currency: An in-game or online currency generally purchased with real money. Can be redeemed inside a virtual world or online game, usually for digital goods.

Virtual Worlds: Online worlds where players create avatars and interact in real-time.

DLC (Downloadable Content): Any content purchased after a full game's installation or purchase that adds new features or extends game play and the life of a game.

Entry Event: The first action a user performs when they enter a game.

Exit Event: Opposite of entry event. It is the last action a user performs before exiting the game.

F2P: Free to play – allows game play without restriction.

Freemium: A business model whereby the core game is free and users are charged for a premium service(s) or virtual good(s).

Free-To-Play: Also known as F2P – allows game play without restriction.

Funnel: The steps a new customer or user takes from entry towards a predefined goal, such as installation, account activation, registration or purchase.

Optimization: Steps taken to improve an app or game's performance, often in terms of important funnels. Optimization involves interpreting analytics and making adjustments to improve them.

Reengagement: The act of bringing lapsed players back to the game. It includes re-engaging gamers who have been signed off for an hour, a day, a month, or more.

Gamification: The use of gameplay, games community, marketing and analytics techniques in non-game environments.

Monetization: The practice of making money from an online or mobile app/property. Typical approaches include display ads, subscriptions, affiliate links, context advertising, add-on purchases, or micro transactions/in-app purchases.

Social Gaming: Multiplayer games with social graphs on social networks and mobile phones. Social games generally have a very gentle learning curve, easy-to-understand UI, and live on a social network, taking advantage of player's friendships in meaningful ways within the game.

3. Advertising Terms

Advertising Network: Sells ads across multiple publishers in order to optimize ad delivery based on the user rather than context.

Ad Server: A web tool that intelligently delivers multiple advertising campaigns spread over time.

Affiliate marketing: A marketing practice in which a business rewards one or more affiliates for each visitor or customer brought about by the affiliate's own marketing efforts.

Affiliate Network: Acts as an intermediary between publishers (affiliates) and merchant affiliate programs. It allows website publishers to more easily find and participate in affiliate programs which are suitable for their website (and thus generate income from those programs), and allows websites offering affiliate programs (typically online merchants) to reach a larger audience by promoting their affiliate programs to all of the publishers participating in the affiliate network.

Context ads: Adverts placed directly inside or next to relevant content or features.

Geo-targeting: Showing content, usually advertisements, only to people in a specific country or region.

Impression: The basic unit of online advertising. An impression is counted when a single user sees a single ad.

4. Behavioral Terms/The Six Social Principles

Reciprocity: This social principle refers to the fact that people usually feel obliged to return favors offered to them. One example includes buying more from a merchant offering a discount.

Scarcity: People tend to want things as they become less available, such as when they are told a certain product will be gone soon so they should buy it now.

Liking: People are more likely to agree to offers from people whom they like.

Authority: People often act in an automated fashion to commands from authority, even if their instincts suggest the commands should not be followed.

Social proof: People generally look to other people similar to themselves when making decisions. This is particularly noticeable in situations of uncertainty or ambiguity.

Commitment/Consistency: People have a general desire to appear consistent in their behavior, and they also value consistency in others.

APPENDIX 3. – Mobile Analytics

Reference to Figure 18. Ideal Divisions in Game Companies (Kim, J. 2013)

Kim, J. 2013. Intriduction to Mobile Analytics & Reporting, Quarterview.
[Online publication]. [Ref. 01 Jun 2013]. Available at:
<http://quarterview.com/?p=1>

Audit

1. User:
 1. DAU (Daily Active Users): How many users used the app on a particular day
 2. DAU/MAU: DAU / Monthly Active Users; to get a sense for marketing and user loss
2. Monetization
 1. ARPDau (Average Revenue Per Daily Active User): Daily Gross Revenue / DAU
 2. ARPPU (Average Revenue Per Paying User)
 3. LTV or some shorter term LTV proxy e.g., 30 Day Cohort ARPU
 4. First Day Conversion
3. Retention:
 1. D1/7/30: Retention on Day 1, Day 7, and Day 30. This is computed by calculating the actual % of users that logged into the app on the specified day from day 0
 2. % Loss: % of users that are considered inactive after not logging in after a specified # of days e.g., 7 days
4. Engagement:
 1. Sessions per Day: # of sessions / DAU
 2. Session length: Average amount of time spent by each user in a session
 1. Session length by level
5. Stability:
 1. Crashes per day:
 1. Server: Number of server or server process crashes per day
 2. Client: Number of client crashes per day
 2. Crashes per 1K (or other # depending on your traffic) DAU
 3. Top 3 crash types: You should try to characterize crashes and isolate where crashes are occurring.
 1. Client: It's typically more difficult to characterize a client crash but at the least you should send up a client dump to help devs try to figure out what happened.
 2. Server: Server crashes are relatively easy to isolate and you should be able to tell even by the line number where problems occurred
6. Performance:
 1. Load time for X by device type: One of the biggest sources of user loss is wait times for loading. After playing your game you should try to identify a few potential problem spots and opportunistically track load/wait times for those areas.
 1. Device type: By characterizing load/wait times by device you can see if there are measurable differences in KPIs based on different wait times you will see on the various device types

User Acquisition (Figure 10 in Chapter 4.2)

1. Marketing:

- a) CPI: Cost per install
- b) Effective CPI: CPI including organics, social, etc. that may reduce the overall cost for a user install
- c) LTV (or LTV proxy)

2. Attribution:

- a) UDID/IDFA lists: You should always check to see if you actually got the users that your vendor claimed to have sent you

Is $LTV - \text{Effective CPI} > 0$?

Optimization

1. Game Economy:

- 1. Sinks and sources of soft currency by level
 - Stack bar graph of each source
- 2. Item by popularity (last 3 days, overall)
 - Soft Currency
 - Hard Currency

2. User Progression:

- 1. By Level:
 - 1. % of players
 - 2. % of plays
 - 3. Average amount of money
 - a. Highest amount of money
 - 4. Average net worth (including item value)
 - a. Highest net worth
 - 5. Average # of days
 - 6. Average # of sessions
 - 7. Average # of battles
- 2. By Loop (e.g., PVE)
 - 1. Show average progression by Level
 - a. E.g., Level vs. Battle # (PVE progression) as a % of users and as a total user count
 - 2. Show highest progression by Level
 - 3. Average mastery level by enemy/map

3. User Activity:

1. Sessions:
 1. Average sessions per day
 2. Highest sessions per day
 3. Average time per session
2. Sessions by Level:
 1. Average sessions per day by level
 2. Average time per session by level
3. Activity Type
 1. % of activity type e.g., PVP vs. PVE vs. Other Loop

4. Game Content/Balance:

1. % character type owned
2. % win by character type
3. Show top 10 squad types (e.g., {archer, mage, knight}, etc.) by win %
4. Show top 5 character types by win %
5. Show bottom 5 character types by loss %

5. Monetization:

1. ARPDau
2. ARPPDAU (Average revenue per paying DAU)
3. % of users who purchase
 1. % of users who purchase by level
 2. % of users who purchase by source
4. ARPU
 1. 1 day, 7 day, 30 day
 2. LTV
5. Average \$ amount spent
 1. \$ spent by level
6. First day buyer conversion %
7. Store
 1. % first item purchased
 2. % spend by category
 3. Top 10 items purchased
 4. Bottom 5 items purchased
 5. Store heat map by clicks (where do users click the most on the store)

6. Retention:

1. Tutorial completion
2. 1 day, 7 day, 14 day, 30 day
3. Funnel by tutorial and level

7. Social/Viral:

1. % FB connect
2. Average # of FB friends installed
 - a. by FB Connect users
3. Average # of FB posts (per user, per active user)
 - a. by FB Connect users
4. % of users who have FB liked
 - a. by FB Connect users

Anti-Hacking

All games can be hacked, especially mobile games with primarily client-based architectures on Android that will be especially prone to hacks and cheats.

Here is a simple list of things you should track:

1. Revenue velocity change
 1. If revenue by day decreases or increases by $> X\%$ (set $X = 20\%$)
2. If user net worth $> 10\%$ in 1 day after level 5 alert and log
3. If # of sessions > 10 per day alert and log
4. If user increases > 1 level per day after level 10 then alert and log

APPENDIX 4. – Interview

eSurvey Creator. Homepage 2014.
[Online publication]. [Ref. 20 May 2014]. Available at:
<https://www.esurveycrator.com>

1. The Interview in eSurvey.com Intro

Hello,

I am BBA student graduating from Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences doing thesis in game marketing and new social channel development research. My goal is to get clear image on what typical day in marketing department consists about. I have done open interview to eSurvey Creator. Answering or forwarding interview to any appropriate receiver in marketing department is much appreciated.

I can send results to your email if so chosen (in the end of questionnaire).

Open Link when you have time for questionnaire:

<https://www.esurveycrator.com/s/41717df>

Thank You,

Have a great summer!

Johanna Kananoja

BBA

Seamk

Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences

<http://www.seamk.fi/en/About-us>

Hei,

Olen valmistuva BBA opiskelija Seinäjoen AMK:sta ja teen lopputyötäni pelien markkinoinnista ja sosiaalisista kanavista. Tavoitteenani on saada mahdollisimman selkeä kuva tyypillisestä markkinoinnin työpäivästä pelitalossa. Olen luonut avoimen haastattelun eSurveyCreator.comiin. Olen hyvin kiitollinen haastatteluun vastaamisesta tai sen *lähettämisestä sopivalle henkilölle*.

Voin halutessanne lähettää tulokset sähköpostiinne (kyselyn lopussa).

Avaa linkki tästä

<https://www.esurveycrator.com/s/41717df>

Thank You,

Have a great summer!

Johanna Kananoja

Seamk

BBA

Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences

<http://www.seamk.fi/en/About-us>

Hi,

the open interview is designed to clarify the daily routines in game company marketing. I am interested in everything from research to campaigns and any other new angle I might have missed. Thesis is about Marketing iOS Games. I am graduating from University of Applied Sciences as BBA 2014.

All questions are designed for working in marketing department in game company and things closely related to it.

The interview will take 5-20minutes of your time, depending how through written answers are.

Feel free to answer with either language, thank you.

Hei,

Avoimen haastattelun tarkoituksena on selventää päivittäisiä rutiineja pelitalon markkinointipuolella. Olen kiinnostunut kaikesta tutkimustyöstä kampanjoihin tai muusta asiasta, joka minulta on mahdollisesti mennyt ohi. Valmistun kesänä 2014 Ammattikorkeasta BBA:lta.

Kaikki kysymykset on suunniteltu toimimaan markkinointipuolelle pelitaloissa ja siihen liittyvissä asioissa.

Haastattelu vie aikaa 5-20 minuuttia, riippuen avoimien vastauksien laajuudesta.

Vastauskieli on vapaa, kiitos.

2. Interview Questions

1. Do you want results to your email? *
2. Do you work or have you worked in iOS marketing department? *
3. What routines do you do daily? 2-3 things.
4. What tools do you use for these routines?
5. Which are your main software for researching data?
6. What are in your opinion top most important data and need the most attention? 2-3 things.
7. What data do you find the most useful when doing decisions? What to highlight.
8. Who is responsible for social media? Which channels do you use?
9. Are you or have you been working with social channels? *
10. How often do you update your channels?
11. Do you have special campaigns in social media? Highlights.
12. Employer, title, sector experience in years. *
13. What type of Cross-Promotion or possibly other co-op you do?
14. Something else to add? New things and thoughts?

*answer required

1. Haluatko tulokset sähköpostiisi? *
2. Työskenteletkö tai oletko työskennellyt iOS markkinointipuolella?*
3. Mitä kuuluu teidän päivittäisiin rutiineihin? 2-3 asiaa.
4. Mitä työkaluja käytätte näihin rutiineihin?
5. Mitkä ovat teidän pääsofotat datan tutkimiseen?
6. Mitkä ovat mielestäsi tärkeimmät asiat ja tarvitsee eniten huomiota? 2-3 asiaa.
7. Hyödyllisin data päätöksiä tehtäessä? Mitä voi korostaa.
8. Kuka on vastuussa sosiaalisista mediasta? Mitä kanavia käytätte?
9. Työskenteletkö tai oletko työskennellyt sosiaalisten kanavien parissa? *
10. Kuinka usein päivitätte kanavianne?
11. Onko teillä markkinointikampanjoita sosiaalisessa mediassa? Kohokohtia.
12. Työnantaja, työtehtävä, kokemus alalta vuosina. *
13. Cross-promotaanko ja teettekö mahdollisesti muunlaista yhteistyötä?
14. Erityistä lisättävää? Uusimpia juttuja ja mietteitä niistä?

*vastattava

3. Unofficial answers for participant five

Role	Exp. / iOS
5 Game Designer & Author	10 /no

What routines do you do daily? 2-3 things.

I am game designer, meaning I do cooperate with marketing – but my main focus is to design the mechanics and other building blocks of game way before work for coding and graphics start. Problem of the job description is that there are no clear routines; sometimes you are deal with tickets and tasks as helping others, next day you might be watching more game testing videos (and invent more tickets) and play game afterwards and think how to make game to be better.

What tools do you use for these routines?

MS Office.

Which are your main software for researching data?

We have a partner, who has built us web interface for displaying analytics. For example, if we need to know how many percent from gamers who started to use game on Monday, return back on Tuesday, you can see the curve from www-interface.

Translated from Finnish to English

4. Links for apps and services by appearance order in the results

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